

**Abstinence Education Contractors  
FY 2005**

**Name of Project:** **Girls Incorporated of Metropolitan Dallas - Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy**

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<b>Population/service area</b>	Youth ages 6 to 18

**Project Summary:**

The goal of the Abstinence Education project at Girls Incorporated of Metropolitan Dallas is to prevent youth in Dallas County from engaging in sexual activity by offering knowledge and skills in abstinence education, emphasizing decision-making and goal-setting skills, to youth and their parents. For goal accomplishment, Girls Inc. will provide three major programming initiatives to youth and their families at six Girls Inc. sites and various community locations: a Health and Sexuality component, a Career and Life Planning component and a Parent Involvement component.

Girls Incorporated developed Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy in the mid 1980s as a coordinated, age-appropriate, abstinence-based series of programs to meet the specific needs and issues facing girls and young women concerning sexuality and sexual decision-making. We know that, counter to impressions from talk shows, the vast majority of girls and young women do not want to get pregnant or get infected with an STD, but do need and want practical information and strategies for avoiding these consequences of sexual activity.

Since its publication in the late-1980s, the series has been implemented with close to 200,000 girls and young women and has won praise for its effectiveness from principals, guidance counselors, youth advocates, community leaders, youth-serving professionals, national organizations, girls and parents. A rigorous, three-year evaluation of the original program found that the programs had promising results. Girls who completed the Growing Together and Will Power/Won't Power programs were more likely to postpone sexual intercourse than those who participated less or not at all.

For girls ages 9 to 11, **Growing Together<sup>SM</sup>** Five interactive sessions jump-start crucial, two-way conversations between girls and a trusted adult about sexuality issues – to open the door to future communication. Key topics include parents being the primary sexuality educators, changes during puberty (anatomy, physiology and hygiene), life-changing STDs, adolescent sexual development and feelings, values and expectations for teen sexual behavior, and the positive aspects of abstinence.

For youth ages 12 to 14, **Will Power/Won't Power<sup>SM</sup>** In this 10 session program youth learn how to say no to sex as they enter the most pressure-sensitive adolescent years. Interactive sessions center on values, relationships, the reproductive system and health and hygiene, separating sexual myths from reality, assertiveness and communication skills, life-changing STDs, identifying and resisting sexual pressures from the media and peer, sexual decision making and avoiding risky situations, and the positive aspects of abstinence.

For Girls ages 12 to 17 **Baby Think It Over:** The Baby Think It Over curriculum teaches teens three key factors: infants require a great deal of time and attention; infants' demands are unpredictable and must be met promptly; and parenting responsibilities impact one's lifestyle profoundly. Girls Inc. utilizes simulation babies to show a group of 25-50 teens the undesirable realities of teen motherhood. A series of five sessions demonstrate the difficult responsibilities of earning money, purchasing necessities and finding a home for a baby.

**Career Action Center:** This program is used in conjunction with the Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy programs to encourage girls to set educational and career goals for their lives in an effort to assist them in realizing the benefit of postponing early sexual involvement until marriage and self-sufficiency are attained.

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All of the programs are offered in English and in Spanish.